



OPERATIONAL BULLETIN: OBO-2021-010

TITLE: Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)'s Prohibition on the Importation and Exportation of Shark Fins.

Date of Issue: 2021-02-09	Mode(s): All	Target Audience: National	Area of Interest: All
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Details:

The purpose of this operational bulletin is to advise Border Services Officers of the prohibition of the importation and exportation of shark fins.

1. **Effective June 21, 2019**, shark fins that are not attached to a shark carcass are prohibited from being imported into or exported from Canada except in accordance with a permit issued by the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard authorizing the import or export.
2. **Section 32** of the *Fisheries Act* authorizes the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard to issue a permit authorizing the importation or exportation into or from Canada of any shark fins or parts of shark fins that are not attached to a shark carcass only if:
 - the importation or exportation is for the purpose of scientific research related to shark conservation; and
 - in the Minister's opinion, the scientific research is likely to benefit the survival of any shark species or is required to enhance the chances of survival of any shark species in the wild.
3. Furthermore, in addition to the DFO import or export permit, species of sharks protected by the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES) must also be accompanied by the required CITES permit(s) in order to be imported to or exported from Canada. For a list of protected species please consult the [CITES species list](#).

Actions required by Border Services Officers (BSOs):

- BSOs will demonstrate extra vigilance when screening travellers and commercial shipments for the presence of shark fin.
- Upon interception of shark fin, BSOs will:

- Verify if the goods are accompanied by a permit* issued by the Minister authorizing the importation of the shark fin.
- Conduct a visual inspection of the goods in order to verify that the goods match the description and not exceed the quantity specified on the permit (**Please note that since no permits have been issued so far, we do not have a sample permit yet to share*).
- Detain goods unaccompanied by a valid permit under section 101 of the Customs Act and store them in evidence bags and a freezer for storing items of this nature, when possible.
- Complete a BSF156 - FPA Interception Receipt, and BSF241 - Non-monetary general receipt for the transfer to DFO in the travellers' stream.
- In addition to the BSF156 and BSF241, complete a Form K26 - Notice of Detention or Form A10 - Cargo Control Abstract if only part of the shipment is non-compliant, in the commercial stream.
- BSOs will refer all attempted importations of shark fin to DFO at:
 - The subject line should consist of the province, the date, the subject, and/or key additional information, in the following format: Province (or alpha code) – YYYY/MM/DD – Subject
 - The email body should include all the relative information regarding the referral, meaning, the name of the importer(s), details of the shipment and import declaration, information being requested, etc.
 - DFO will respond to enquiries and/or referrals as soon as possible.
- Please note that although shark fin appears as approved on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) Automated Import Reference System (AIRS), importation of shark fins or parts of shark fins that are not attached to a shark carcass is prohibited under DFO's legislation.

Actions Required by Superintendents:

Superintendents will ensure that BSOs are aware of the contents of this operational bulletin and of the Customs Notice 21-02.

Contact Information:

Any questions regarding this bulletin should be directed to your Food, Plant and Animal (FPA) Regional Program Officer (RPO).

Approved by: Lidija Lebar, Director
Program and Policy Management
Commercial Program

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Commercial and Trade Branch

Effective Date: 2021-02-09

Updated:

Additional bulletins: